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IN RELATION

TO THE PROGRESSIVE INCREASE,

PRESENT CONDITION,

AND FUTURE PROSPECTS,

OF

PHILADELPHIA,

AS

CONNECTED WITH THE PERMANENT LOCATION

OF

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Philadelphia:

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1838.

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F A C T S , &c.

THE question of the location of the new Public Buildings, which seems now to be seriously agitated, is one that ought to be decided without any reference to personal interest; but with entire regard to the convenience and accommodation of those for whose use they are intended. This decision, the writer believes, will be very much aided, by noticing some of the facts in relation to the progressive increase of the city, up to this time,—its present condition and future prospects. After presenting various facts on these several points, he will express his own opinion with regard to the proper location of the buildings to be erected, and assign such reasons for it, as, to himself at least, appear satisfactory and conclusive.

Let us, then, first take a survey of the condition of the city about the period of the erection of the present state-house. It was commenced in 1729, and finished in 1734, or 1735, about fifty years from the landing of William Penn, at an expense of about £6000. At this time the depth of the lot was only about half the present distance between Chesnut and Walnut Streets, and so continued till 1762, when the other portion towards Walnut Street was purchased. The surface of the ground in the neighbourhood was very uneven and irregular, being more elevated than now; and was surrounded with commons, duck ponds, and creeks, in which some of

our citizens, who have died within a few years, remembered catching perch and other fishes.*

The city was, in 1704, divided into ten wards,† which division, so far as known to the writer, continued until 1800. The eastern front, on the Delaware, from Vine to Walnut, was in two divisions, viz. Lower and Upper Delaware Wards. Their western boundary was Front Street, High Street being the dividing line. Lower Delaware contained, in 1741, (six years after the state-house was finished,) 115 taxables, and Upper Delaware Ward 99. From Walnut to Mulberry Street, and from Front to Second Street, contained three wards, viz. Walnut, Chesnut, and High. The first contained, in 1741, 98 taxables; the second, 143; and the third, 151. Mulberry Ward occupied the whole space between Front and Seventh Streets, and Vine and Mulberry, and contained, in the same year, 309 taxables. South, Middle, and North Wards, were formed out of the space between Mulberry and Walnut, and Second and Seventh. South Ward, in which stood the state-house, contained, in 1741, 105 taxables; Middle Ward, 236; and North Ward, 182. Dock Ward embraced all the portion of the city between the Delaware and Seventh Streets, and Walnut and Cedar, and contained, in the same year, 183 taxables. The whole number of taxables in the city at this time (1741) was only 1621.§

We have no earlier account of the number of houses in the city than 1749, when several respectable gentlemen (Dr. Franklin being one) undertook the task of making it. It was as follows:

Mulberry Ward, -	488	Walnut Ward, -	104
North, - -	196	Chesnut, - -	110
Middle, - -	238	High, - -	147
South, (state-house)	117	Lower Delaware, -	110
Dock, - - -	245	Upper Delaware -	109

Making the total number of houses in the city in 1749, 1864,‡ besides 11 places of worship.

* Watson's Annals.

† Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. page 110.

‡ Watson's Annals, p. 662.

§ Watson's Annals, page 662. Register of Pennsylvania, vol. iii. page 40.

Twenty years after, to wit, in 1769,* we have another enumeration, when it appears there were 3318 houses, being an increase of 1454. This increase was principally in Dock, Mulberry, and North Wards. South Ward, in which the state-house was located, had only thirty houses added to it in those twenty years.

In 1777, when the British were in possession of the city, Lord Cornwallis directed General Howe to take a particular account of the houses, stores, and inhabitants, in each ward; which being accomplished, the result was published.† The following is the result of the number of houses, to which we add the increase in each ward for the twenty-eight years, since the above was taken in 1749.

Mulberry Ward, -	1096	increase	608
North, - -	427	"	231
Middle - -	371	"	133
South (state-house), -	160‡	"	43
Dock, - -	1016	"	771
Walnut, - -	110	"	6
Chesnut, - -	118	"	8
High, - -	193	"	46
Lower Delaware, -	123	"	13
Upper Delaware, -	249	"	140
Houses, 3863		"	1999 in 28 yrs.

The reason why Walnut, Chesnut, High and Lower Delaware did not proportionally increase with the other wards probably is, that being small wards, and convenient to the river business, they were filled up at first, and had not room for further additions.

We will now inquire into the number of inhabitants at several periods.

In 1744 the population of the city was estimated by Secretary Peters at 13,000,§ though it appears by a statement,|| that in 1753

* Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. p. 448. Watson, p. 664.

† Pennsylvania Evening Post, 1778. Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. p. 127.

‡ Increase in eight years 13.

§ Watson, page 662.

|| Mease's Picture of Philadelphia, page 31; this and the following items probably embrace the then suburbs.

there were 14,563; in 1760, 18,756; in 1769, 28,042; and in 1777 General Howe made it but 15,847. But as he found 383 houses empty, the probability is, many of the inhabitants had fled from the city on the approach of the British. He found in

Mulberry Ward . 4011 inhab.	Walnut Ward, . . 418 inhab.
North, ... 1725 “	Chesnut, ... 445 “
Middle, ... 1447 “	High, ... 721 “
South (state-house) 619 “	Lower Delaware, . 410 “
Dock, ... 5307 “	Upper Delaware, . 744 “

About the year 1774 the Walnut Street Prison was built.

With regard to the early commerce of the city, we are in possession of but few facts. It appears that in

1722,	10 vessels of 428 Tons were built*
1723,	13 “ 507 “
1724,	19 “ 959 “
and in 1722,†	96 vessels of 3531 Tons cleared
1723,	99 “ 3942 “
1724,	119 “ 5450 “
1725,	140 “ 6655 “

And in 1728-9,‡ 14 ships, 3 snows, 8 brigs, 2 schooners, and 9 sloops were frozen up at the docks at one time.

The trade with Great Britain formed at this time, probably, the largest portion of the commerce of the city. The imports and exports for a few years will furnish some idea of its extent.

EXPORTS.				IMPORTS.			
1729,	£ st.	7,434	16 1	£ st.	29,799	10 10	
1730,		10,582	1 4		48,592	7 5	
1731,		12,786	11 6		44,260	16 1	
1732,		8,524	12 6		41,698	13 7	
1733,		14,776	19 4		40,565	8 1§	

* Votes of Assembly. Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. page 5.

† Ibid.

‡ Watson, page 659.

§ Whitworth's Trade of Great Britain; Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. page 6.

In 1729 a mail went to New York once in two weeks in winter, and once a week in summer.

In 1735, 199 vessels entered and 212 cleared.*

1736, 211	-	-	215	do.
1742, 230	-	-	281	do.

So that the commerce of the city had somewhat increased in the seventeen years.

The exports from Great Britain were, in 1742, £8527 12s. 8d. and the imports were £75,295 3s. 4d. sterling.

In 1777,† the number of stores, as ascertained by General Howe, was 315, viz. in

Mulberry Ward	-	17	Walnut	-	-	5
North	-	28	Chesnut	-	-	8
Middle	-	15	High	-	-	6
South (state-house)	-	9	Lower Delaware	-	100	
Dock	-	55	Upper Delaware	-	72	

which shows that business was principally confined to the neighbourhood of the river.

We have now brought down our historical sketch of the city to the period of the revolution, embracing about one hundred years from its settlement, and have shown how slow was its progress; which the circumstances of the succeeding ten years were not calculated to hasten.

In 1784,‡ the year after the peace, the imports from Great Britain amounted to £689,491 9s. 9d. sterling; and in 1785 they fell to £369,215 8s. 5d. The exports in 1784 were £70,263 10s. 9d. and in 1785, £57,705 6s. 5d sterling.

In 1783 the number of houses was estimated at 6000,§ and in 1790, at 6651. And the population, as ascertained by the congressional census of that year, was 28,522.|| Up to this year, and for

* Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. page 127 in detail.

† Ibid, page 127.

‡ Whitworth; Register of Pennsylvania.

§ Mease—city and suburbs?

|| Ibid, city.

several years beyond it, as will be seen presently, the improvements did not extend even to Seventh Street, the then western limit of the wards.

Since commencing this article an aged citizen informed the writer, that "he well remembers when a certain house (still standing) was erected in Market above Fifth Street, 1792, the owner was almost considered as deranged for placing his building so far beyond the seat of civilization."

Watson, in his *Annals*, published in 1830, says: "It is only thirty years (1800) since the north side of Chesnut Street, facing the state-house, now so compact and stately in its houses, had but two good houses in the whole line of the street from Fifth to Sixth Street; but one of these now remains, the present residence of P. S. Duponceau, Esq., at the north-east corner of Sixth Street. The whole scene was an out-town spectacle, without pavement, and of uninviting aspect. In the midst of this area stood the State-house Inn, a small two story tavern, of rough-dashed construction, very old, being marked with the year 1693, as its birth-year. It stood back a little from the line of the street, but in lieu of a green courtyard to gratify the eye, the space was filled with bleached oyster-shells,—the remains of numerous years of shells, left about the premises at occasions of elections, &c. It looked like a sea-beach tavern. That single and diminutive inn for a long time gave all the entertainment then taken by the court suitors, or by those who hung about the colonial assemblies and the primitive Congress. But desolate as it looked in front and rear, having a waste lot of commons instead of garden shrubbery, and the neighbouring lots equally open and cheerless, there was a redeeming appendage in a range of lofty and primitive walnut trees, which served as distant pointers to guide the stranger to the venerable state-house,—itself beyond the verge of common population." Page 349.

"The ground forming the square from Chesnut to Walnut Street, and from Sixth to Seventh, was all a grass meadow, under fence down to the year 1794. On the Chesnut Street side it was high and had steps of ascent cut into the bank, and across it went a foot-path as a short-cut to the almshouse out Spruce Street. The only houses to be seen were the low brick building, once the Logan-

ian Library on Sixth Street, and the Episcopal Academy, built in 1780, on Chesnut Street." "The next square beyond, westward, was Norris's pasture lot." "On the northwest corner of Chesnut and Seventh Streets was a high grass lot, in a rail fence, extending half way to Eighth Street. Except one or two brick houses at the corner of Eighth Street, you met no other house to Schuylkill." "There were no houses built out Arch or Race Street, save here and there a mean low box of wood, beyond Sixth Street."

"When the Roman Catholic Church at the corner of Sixth and Spruce Street was built, it was deemed far out of town,—a long and muddy walk,—for there were no streets paved near to it, and no houses were then nigh. From this neighborhood to the Pennsylvania Hospital, then having its front of access on its eastern gate, was quite beyond civilization. There were not streets enough marked through the waste lots, in the western parts of the city, to tell a traveller on what square he was travelling." "We shall be within bounds to say, that twenty-five years ago (1805), so few owners enclosed their lots towards Schuylkill, that the street roads of Walnut, Spruce and Pine Streets could not be traced by the eye beyond Broad Street, and even it was then known but upon paper drafts."

Birch's Views of the City in 1800 confirm the above account. For between the President's house on Ninth Street, now the University, and the almshouse on Spruce Street, there is no intervening object. The writer of this well remembers when the whole of that square, in which stood Markoe's house, was enclosed by a post and rail fence, and almost the only house west of it was Dunlap's, at the corner of Twelfth and Market Streets.

Our attention has thus far been directed entirely to the limits of the city proper. Let us now look at some few facts respecting the suburbs and the county.

In 1749* there were in the Northern Liberties 62 houses. In 1769,* there were 553 houses, and in 1777,† there were 1286, and 55 stores, and 5015 inhabitants. In 1790,‡ they had increased to 8337.

* Watson, page 662. 664.

† Pennsylvania Evening Post, 1778; Reg. Penn. vol. i. page 127.

‡ Mease, page 35.

In 1749* there were in Southwark 150 houses. In 1769 there were 603 houses, and in 1777,† 836, and 6 stores, and 2872 inhabitants. In 1790,‡ they had increased to 5661. Passyunk contained in that year 884, and Moyamensing 1592 inhabitants.

From the returns of members to the General assembly we have the following account of the highest and lowest number of votes given at elections in the *County* for several years about the time of the erection of the state-house. The county at this time extended to the southern limit of Berks, and embraced the whole of Montgomery county.§

1727	highest vote	787	lowest	482
1728		971		487
1730		622		365
1732		904		559
1734		821		441
1735		1097		517
1736		719		439
1738		1306		736
1739		555		332

In 1741,|| the number of taxables in the county was 3422, and in 1760, 5687, and the county tax was £5653 19s. 6d. Within the county there were 83 grist mills, 40 saw, 6 paper, 1 oil, 12 fulling, 1 horse, and 1 wind mill, and 6 forges.

In 1779, there were 7066 taxables in the county.

1786,	4516 ¶
1793,	6885
1800,	7919

About the year 1800, the improvements began to extend west of Seventh Street, in some of the principal streets. In 1802, as we learn from the dates on the houses, the improvements were made on the square between Chesnut and Walnut and Seventh and Eighth, on the ruins of the immense edifice of Robert Morris, which had been commenced a few years previously. From this time buildings began to be erected with some spirit, in various directions, as the following table of the houses built in the respective years will show :

* Watson, page 664.

† Pennsylvania Evening Post; Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. page 127.

‡ Mease, page 35.

§ Watson, 663.

|| Ibid, page 659.

¶ Probably reduced by the revolution.

*In 1802	464	In 1834	361 †
1803	385	1835	465
1804	273	1836	369
1809	1295	1837	245

How many of these were erected in the western part of the city we are unable to ascertain precisely ; but we know that a great number of those erected within the last few years have been built beyond Broad Street. And, indeed, an inspection of the houses in that quarter will show, that they almost all present an appearance of very late erection.

Let us now take a summary view of some facts relating to the present condition of the city, by which it may be compared with the past.

The Taxables in the city, in 1835, were 18,449, and in the county, 31,798.‡ The number of inhabitants probably 100,000 in the city—at the general election in that year the highest vote was 5,532§—in the county 6,048—and the united highest vote of both 11,596. In the year ending September, 1836||—there were built 74 vessels of 10,214 Tons. The amount of Tonnage owned was 91,905 Tons—407 vessels entered, Tonnage 89,485, and 350 cleared—64,019. Imports \$15,068,233—Exports \$3,971,555. The whole number of arrivals including coastwise, in 1837, was 8185. Valuation of city, \$68,528,742¶—county \$56,521,225. An immense trade with the west—all the principal streets paved from the Delaware to Schuylkill, with comfortable foot-pavements, lighted by night with lamps and Gas—and the whole city supplied with pure and wholesome water—omnibuses to convey persons from river to river, and rail-ways connected with the Northern and Southern portions of the county, and with the heart of the city. Such is the present state of the city—how different from what it was at the periods we have already noticed.

That the city has been extending westwardly with great rapidity is proved by the following facts.

1. The limits of the Wards have been twice altered since the census of 1790, viz. in 1800 and 1825.

* Watson † Minutes of Select and Common Councils. ‡ Ibid.

§ Official returns : Register of Pennsylvania, vol. xvi. page 278.

|| Report of Secretary of Treasury, on Comm. and Navigation.

¶ Commercial List ; Register of Pennsylvania, vol. xvi. page 62.

2. The number of taxables in the eastern wards between 1828 and 1835 decreased 836, while in the Western, they increased in the same time 2,743.*

3. The valuation of property in the eastern wards only increased between 1829 and 1835, \$30,061—while that in the western increased \$3,178,650, as by the following tables.†

<i>Eastern,</i>	1829.	1835.
New Market,	1,264,469	1,045,398
Lower Delaware,	1,593,733	1,653,855
Pine,	1,257,165	1,168,520
Upper Delaware,	1,261,635	1,287,141
Chesnut	3,106,572	3,228,078
Walnut,	2,240,299	2,254,793
High,	2,949,362	3,192,825
Dock,	1,921,924	1,794,610
	15,595,159	15,625,220

Increase, 30,061.

<i>Western,</i>		
North,	1,711,745	2,163,838
S. Mulberry,	1,069,534	1,393,006
Locust,	1,655,472	2,004,173
N. Mulberry,	716,918	1,051,050
Middle,	1,357,545	1,858,037
South,	1,467,345	1,983,305
Cedar,	629,068	1,332,868
	8,607,627	11,786,277

Increase, 3,178,650.

4. The population, according to the census of 1830, of the Eastern wards was only 5456 greater than of the Western.

5. The comparative increase of Taxes‡ of the eastern and western wards from 1832 to 1836, as appears by the following tables.

* Minutes of Select and Common Council.

† Official Documents.

‡ We have taken the County Tax on City property in all cases where the Taxes are referred to.

<i>Eastern,</i>	1832.	1836.
New Market,	\$6,768 63	7,113 01
Lower Delaware,	10,260 79	11,095 52
Pine,	7,145 41	7,859 32
Upper Delaware,	8,049 25	8,676 42
Chesnut,	19,895 03	21,080 68
Walnut,	13,227 21	14,470 87
High,	19,954 00	20,908 77
Dock,	12,896 44	12,025 96
	\$98,196,76	\$103,230,55
<i>Western,</i>		
North,	11,391 47	14,220 61
S. Mulberry,	7,651 75	9,376 65
Locust,	11,293 88	13,543 60
N. Mulberry,	5,598 39	7,237 67
Middle,	9,581 12	12,393 79
South,	11,194 29	13,095 06
Cedar,	5,269 79	8,797 42
	61,980 69	78,664 80

From the foregoing it appears that the Tax on property in the eastern wards amounts to \$5,033.79 more in 1835, than it did in 1832, while the Tax on property in the Western Wards has in the same time increased \$16,684.11—being, in the first case, an increase of 5.12 per cent on the Taxes of 1832, and in the latter, an increase of 26.82 per cent.

There are two causes which naturally lead to the increase of the city westward.

1. The increase of population, and the greater space now required for the transaction of business than formerly—when most of the houses were occupied both as stores and dwellings—whereas now, in many streets, the whole tenement is used entirely as a store, and its former inmates have sought residences in other parts of the city. These, again, by the gradual extension of business, have been compelled to leave what they had first selected as private and retired residences, for others still further towards the west.

2. Another reason is, the actual increase of business on the western border of the city, of which we shall speak more presently.

That the city must continue to extend in a western direction will, we think, appear from the following remarks.

1. There is but comparatively little room in the eastern wards for further improvements. In 1790, when the first U. S. census was taken, the dimensions of the whole city, divided among the inhabitants, gave to each person 1755 square feet; in 1800 the space to each was reduced to 1216, in 1810 to 933, in 1820 to 786, and in 1830 to 623 feet each. Upon the same principle, the following table shows the average of the *Western* and *Eastern* Wards :

EASTERN.	WESTERN.
1800—373 square feet.	2,109 square feet to each.*
1810—349	1,359
1820—340	1,058
1830—313	979

2. The great and rapidly increasing trade with the West; and the various methods used for extending and accommodating it, in the western part of the city, will undoubtedly in a few years, cover the already contracted western wards with houses and population. That William Penn, in his great wisdom and foresight, regarded such an event as certain, is evident, from the following expressions used by him in his letter, dated 16th of 6 mo. 1683, to a committee of the "Society of Free Traders," in London. Comparing the two rivers, he says—"Delaware is a glorious river, but Schuylkill, being a hundred miles boatable above the falls, and its course N. E. towards the fountain of Susquehannah that tends to the heart of the province, and both sides our own, it is like to be a great part of the settlement of this age."

And in 1690, he actually issued proposals for building another city, "upon the river Susquehannah that runs into the Bay of Chesapeake, and bears about 50 miles from the river Delaware."

"There," (says he) "I design to lay out a plan for the building of another city in the most convenient place for communication, with the former plantations on the East, which by land is as good as done already, a way being laid out between the

* See Register of Pennsylvania, vol. viii. p. 67, for a table of the denseness of population in each ward.

two rivers, very exactly and conveniently at least three years ago ; and which will not be hard to do by water, by the benefit of the river *Sculkill*, for, a *branch* of that river lies near a branch that runs into Susquehannagh River, and is the common course of the *Indians* with their Skins and Furrs into our parts, and to the provinces of East and West Jersey, and New York, from the *West* and *Northwest* parts of the continent from whence they bring them.”

“But that which recommends both this settlement in particular and the province in general, is a late patent obtained by divers eminent Lords and gentlemen for *that land that lies north of Pennsylvania*, up to the *46th degree and an half*, because their Traffic and intercourse will be chiefly through Pennsylvania which lies between that province and the sea. We have also the comfort of being the *centre* of all the English Colonies upon the *continent of America*, as they lie from the N. E. parts of *New England* to the *most Southerly parts of Carolina*, being above 1000 miles upon the coast.”*

Although William Penn did not live long enough to see the fulfilment of all his extended and pleasing anticipations, yet we, his descendants, are now realizing and benefiting by their accomplishment.

1. Then, we have a regular connection with the Susquehannah by both “land and water,” and with the immense Coal and Iron regions, 108 “miles above the falls,” upon the Schuylkill. The importance and increase of this branch of business will appear by the following facts.

In 1825, there were brought down the Schuylkill 6500 tons of Coal, which by the last report of the Schuylkill Navigation Company, has so much increased, that last year (1837,) no less than 506,475 tons reached this city, which at an average price of $\$5\frac{1}{2}$ per ton, would amount to $\$2,785,612$ being greater than the value of all the Imports from Great Britain, in any one year (with two or three exceptions) of the first 100 years from the landing of William Penn, and equal to more than two-thirds of the value of all the exports from the state to all parts of the world in the year ending September, 1836. The whole amount of tonnage on this Canal, in 1837, was 726,730 tons. In 13 years,

* Register of Pennsylvania, vol. i. page 400.

viz. from 1825 to 1837, the amount of tolls alone have increased from \$15,775.74* to 604,189.57, a sum exceeding twice the value of all the exports to Great Britain from the colony in any one of the first 100 years after its settlement.

Of the Coal which reached the city by the Schuylkill in 1837, 328,304 tons were shipped from that river in 3070 vessels, which shows a considerable increase since 1834, in which year only 1654 vessels were employed for that purpose, viz. 72 brigs, 1,122 schooners, 420 sloops. On the 4th June, 1832, 117 vessels passed through Gray's Ferry bridge, 40 of which were brigs and large schooners, and a few days before 104 vessels exclusive of boats passed; formerly only 3 or 4 passed per week. It is but a few years since only a wood shallop was to be occasionally seen on this river, which now transports millions on its waters.

The whole amount of tonnage employed in transporting coal on the Schuylkill in 1835, was 24,733 tons, and in 1836, 24,479 boats passed the Fairmount locks with coal or other products; and in the same year, 12,200 boats ascended the river; and in 1837, 13,870 boats ascended, of which 5102 were loaded with merchandize; and 13,912 boats descended, of which 8960 were loaded with coal, and 4952 with produce, limestone and other articles, making the total number of boats which passed the Fairmount locks in 1837, 27,782; besides all which, there is a considerable portion of the trade of the Schuylkill at intermediate points, which does not reach the city, as for instance, 575 boats with 28,775 tons of coal, last year discharged their cargoes short of the city.

2. Let us turn towards the business of the Susquehannah. By the report of the Union Canal Company it appears, during the year ending November, 1837,† there were transported 246,472,833 lbs. or 110,032 tons, and that tolls to the amount of \$107,590 37 were received, and that 6,204 boats passed through that canal.

We have now in connection with State Canals and Rail Roads, a regular communication with Pittsburg, forming together a length of 401 miles, and thus opening in every direc-

* Report of Schuylkill Navigation Company, 1838.

† Report of Union Canal Company, 1837.

tion a trade with the great West to an almost unlimited extent, "passing through the heart of our own state," where but a few years since the savage roamed and murdered the almost defenceless settlers. In 1753* in Pittsburg, itself, now called the "Gate of the West," there was not a single white man residing. In 1770 there were but about 20 houses, inhabited by Indian traders. In 1793† the arrival of a keel boat was considered one of the greatest enterprises ever performed. In 1804‡ it was a village—in 1805§ the first stage crossed the mountains, requiring 7 days of hard labour, to reach that city. In 1833 there were four daily stages, in 1834 the journey was performed in 57 hours. It now probably contains 40,000 inhabitants. In 1834 there were 120 steam engines in operation, and 1634 steamboats arrived and departed,|| and the city business is estimated at 15 to 20 millions of dollars per annum. "It communicates with upwards of 50,000 miles of steam navigation, of the vast and fertile valley of the Mississippi, extending over a surface near 1500 miles square."¶

Let us now examine the business upon these rail roads and canals, the main line of which to Pittsburg cost for its construction \$12,358,000.** By the Canal Commissioners Report, it appears that, in 1837, \$885,199.99 were received in tolls, and for motive power on this part of the State works, being about 3 per cent on its cost. That the arrivals and departures of boats and cars were equal to 50,248 westwardly, and 51,092 eastwardly.

What the value of property transported was, cannot be ascertained, but when it is considered that most of the supplies for the whole extent of the Mississippi valley, and even beyond it, pass by this route, it must indeed be immense. Some few facts will, however, tend to throw light on this point. In 1835,†† before the Canal was opened in the spring at Pittsburg, it is stated by an "old merchant" of that place, that 200 to 250 wagons ar-

* Pittsburg Gazette; Register of Pennsylvania, vol. xii. page 303.

† Wheeling Gazette; Register of Pennsylvania, vol. xii. page 196.

‡ Breckenridge's Sketches; Reg. of Penn. vol. xiv. page 25, 41.

§ Pittsburg Gazette; Reg. of Penn., vol. xiii. page 384.

|| Pittsburg Statesman; Reg. of Penn., vol. xv. page 80.

¶ Pittsburg Gazette; Reg. of Penn., vol. xvi. page 22.

** Canal Commissioners Report, page 7.

†† Pittsburg Advocate; Reg. of Penn. vol. xvi. page 30.

rived there weekly with goods from the East, and when the canal opened, although *ten daily lines of boats*, instead of four or five, the usual number, were employed, they were insufficient to carry off the goods as fast as they arrived. From the 16th March to 22nd June, 1835, 30,234,065 pounds were received from the East, and 16,653,429 pounds sent to the East, and 873 boats departed for the East, and 849 arrived from the East. The same merchant estimates the value of goods arriving by wagons and the Pennsylvania canals at from 50 to 70 millions of dollars.* From November 1834, to November 1835, 14,172 cars departed from Philadelphia to the West, and the number of miles travelled by passengers on the route was 2,875,649 $\frac{3}{4}$; and in 1837, 104,793 passengers were conveyed on the Columbia and Philadelphia Rail Road, and 37,555 cars passed the Schuylkill inclined plane.† There are now employed on this road 40 locomotive engines, some of them capable of drawing a train of 30 cars. The expense of transportation does not probably exceed one half of that by wagons. There were the past season in operation 11 transportation companies, 5 from Schuylkill and 6 from Broad street, capable of conveying 550 tons of goods daily, equal to nearly 200 wagon loads.‡

Besides the state roads and canals, there are others, or soon will be, in every direction either uniting with them or entering at other points, the western portion of the city, among which is the important one just being completed between this city and Baltimore.

With all these facilities of intercourse, and with such an extent of country to be supplied through their instrumentality, who can pretend to limit the extent of business, which must ultimately be concentrated in this western quarter of the city! These works and this trade are all comparatively in their infancy. Who can foretel, what other channels and sources of business may be developed in the course of their progress, which are now unthought of?

The time is probably not very distant, when all the business

* Pittsburg Advocate ; Register of Pennsylvania, vol. xvi. page 30.

† Documents of Canal Commissioners, pages 56, 85.

‡ Statement in the daily Newspapers of the Companies, and their respective capabilities.

connected with the west, will be transacted in that quarter of the city, and when vessels will at once enter the Schuylkill with their foreign cargoes and receive in return the western produce—for it is not reasonable to suppose, that the wholesale stores which supply the groceries and dry-goods, intended to be sent off by the western canals and rail roads, will always be alone found in the eastern portion of the city, when suitable accommodations for their business can be provided in the very quarter, from which the goods are to be forwarded to their destination; especially as the heavy charges of portage and commissions for forwarding, and the delay in sending merchandize to this point, may be avoided—each river will most probably have its appropriate sphere of business. In times of a brisk commerce, the wharves of the Delaware have been found scarcely sufficient for the accommodation of the vessels. We have seen them lying two or three abreast, waiting for their turns for an inside birth, and that day may again arrive. And we already see that the wharves as yet constructed on the Schuylkill, afford but partial accommodation for the small business, compared with what it must before many years be, which it now enjoys—so that both rivers may be necessary, to meet the demands of commerce; and both sides of the Schuylkill, if its trade extend as rapidly as it has done for the past ten years.

With such prospects before us, and with all these facts staring us in the face, we cannot but think it would be unwise to erect buildings which are to accommodate the citizens, for centuries perhaps to come, in the very neighbourhood, selected when there were but 1621 taxables in the city; and but 105 in the very ward in which the State House stands, and but 117 houses, even 15 years after its erection. If therefore we are to regard at all, in this matter, the future population of the city, as well as the present, the public buildings ought to be placed in some central position, as nearly equally accessible to all as possible—and we are decidedly of the opinion, (without having any personal interest as regards property,) that PENN SQUARE is the proper place for them, both with a view to the present as well as future generations—and for the following reasons:

1. The city already owns that property, and it was given to it for the very purpose—and was, no doubt, selected by Penn,

with his usual foresight and wisdom, having regard to the future accommodation of both sections of the city. It is described as follows: "In the centre of the city is a square of ten acres, at each angle to build houses for public affairs." "In the middle of the city, from side to side, of the like breadth in the centre of the city, is a square of ten acres; at each angle are to be houses for public affairs, as a Meeting House, Assembly, or State House, Market House, Schoolhouse, and several other buildings for public concerns."* The inference from which is, that this was the only site designed by Penn, even in these early days, for the public buildings.†

2. The price of purchase of another site, would be equivalent probably to the expense of erecting a new building, which the city may as well save.

3. It will probably be as convenient to the present population as any other situation: for,

1. The greater number of Taxable inhabitants reside within the limits of the western wards, as is shown by the following table;—for the sake of comparison, a table of taxables in 1828, is added.‡

<i>Eastern Wards.</i>	1828.	1835.
New Market,	1452	1472
Lower Delaware,	1501	1285
Pine,	1020	869
Upper Delaware,	1216	1142
Chesnut,	821	837
Walnut,	1117	739
High,	914	825
Dock,	863	899
	8904	8068
<i>Western Wards.</i>		
North,	1393	1710
South Mulberry,	1051	1230
Locust,	1364	1659
North Mulberry,	1011	1470
Middle,	774	1023
South,	599	1103
Cedar,	1446	2186
	7638	10381

* Advertisement by the Surveyor General, Thomas Holmes; Digest of City Ordinances, page 347.

† A Meeting House *was* erected there in 1685; Watson, page 337.

‡ Minutes of Select and Common Councils, page 142.

Thus we see that there are 2313 more tax payers, and probably property holders in the western wards, than in the eastern, and that while the western increased 2743, the eastern decreased 836.

2. The largest portion of the population resides in the western wards, as the following table will show, based upon the calculation of 5 inhabitants to 1 taxable, which proportion has been ascertained to be about correct, as compared with the census tables. At the census of 1830, there were only 5456 more persons in the eastern than the western wards.

<i>Eastern.</i>		<i>Western.</i>	
New Market,	7360	North,	8550
Lower Delaware,	6425	South Mulberry,	6150
Pine,	4345	Locust,	8295
Upper Delaware,	5710	North Mulberry,	7350
Chesnut,	4185	Middle,	5115
Walnut,	3695	South,	5515
High,	4125	Cedar,	10930
Dock,	4495		
	40340		51905

Showing a difference of population in favor of the western wards of 11,565 in 1835, which has since been increased. What will it be by the time the buildings are finished, if commenced at once? It is believed, from some examination into the subject, that most of the Judges of the courts as well as lawyers, reside in the western wards. The largest number of votes at the last election, was given in the western wards, as appears by the following table, for State Senator, October, 1837.

<i>Eastern.</i>		<i>Western.</i>	
New Market,	492	North,	732
Lower Delaware,	559	South Mulberry,	576
Pine,	417	Locust,	638
Upper Delaware,	569	North Mulberry,	739
Walnut,	282	Middle,	500
Chesnut,	319	South,	544
High,	389	Cedar,	606
Dock,	417		
	3444		4335

Showing a difference in favour of the western wards of 891.

3. The valuation of property in the two portions of the city does not present so great a difference as might be imagined.

In 1835 the eastern were assessed at \$15,625,220

western	11,786,277
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difference,	\$ 3,838,943 *
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But it is well known that the most important improvements in the western wards have taken place since that assessment. The assessment now in progress, would probably exhibit a very different result. From 1829 to 1835 the eastern wards only increased in value \$30,061 while the western gained 3,178,650.

4. By means of the rail roads, which will all centre at this point, it will be more convenient to residents in the northern parts of the city and county, as well as in the southern to come to Penn Square, than it will be for the inhabitants of the western wards to go to the neighborhood of the present State house: and certainly much more so than it was for the inhabitants at the lower end of the very ward where the State house stands for sixty or seventy years after it was erected.

5. The city has a direct interest in placing the State house in Penn Square, beside that of owning it. It will be the means of extending improvements in every direction, by which, not only the City revenue from taxes will be augmented, thereby refunding the large expenditures heretofore made for paving, lighting, and furnishing water to this portion of the city, hitherto solely for the convenience of the Eastern population; but the value of the City property in this quarter will be much enhanced, and they have at this time a large interest here and in the neighborhood, viz. The Girard buildings from Market to Chestnut, the city stores, wharves, Gas works, unimproved property and water works on Schuylkill, public squares, Girard College, Will's Hospital, markets, &c. which would all be benefited.

6. The employment which all the improvements consequent on the occupation of Penn square, would furnish to thousands of mechanics, is an important consideration. Independent of those who might be engaged about the public buildings (let them be placed where they may be) the number of private and proba-

* See page 12.

bly other public buildings which would be erected in the west, would give bread to many a mechanic and labourer, who knows not where to procure it at present.

7. The erection of these buildings on the prison lot could not produce any of these effects, except in a very limited degree. There is no city property it would benefit; it might perhaps enhance a small portion of private property, just in the neighborhood—it would furnish little more than employment to those engaged about the building, and it could not promote the general improvement of the City. Moreover, the quantity of ground is not sufficient for the purpose, and it is at the corner of streets, from which there would be so much noise as to prevent the transaction of business by our courts, &c. as is the case now. The location at Penn square would not injure any public or private property on the Eastern front, and being divided into four lots, would admit of a more advantageous disposition of the public buildings for the accommodation of the city, county, and even state, if the Legislature, as they ought, should see fit to remove to the city. Being probably on the highest ground of the city, and having no other buildings near them, they could be so placed as to enjoy the greatest share of light, and the freest circulation of air; from the want of both of which our courts so much suffer. Besides the grounds might be tastefully improved in such manner as to furnish to the citizens in the neighbourhood a pleasant and fashionable walk.

8. It has been, I think, suggested, that they might be erected on Independence Square,—either pulling down our venerable Independence Hall, and placing them in the centre,—or allowing the hall to remain, and occupy the portion towards Walnut Street. With regard to the first plan, the great difficulty would be, to obtain the consent of the citizens. The next objection is, that there is a provision in various acts of Assembly, passed in relation to this square, which says: “*that no part of the ground lying to the southward of the state-house should be converted into, or made use of for erecting buildings, but that the same should be an open public green and walk for ever.*” It would at least require the aid of the Legislature, if even the consent of the citizens could be obtained, to occupy with buildings a square so important to the health of so dense a portion of the city.

It has been objected, that many of our public buildings and institutions are in the eastern part of the city,—such as the Custom-house, Exchange, Banks, Library, &c. With regard to the custom-house, we are now attempting to procure a new and permanent one. Let, then, it be located further west, for in a few years it will be required for the business of both rivers; besides, as most of the merchants reside in the west, and visit their stores daily, they can suffer little inconvenience on this score. So also with the Exchange and Banks. But all these institutions or others will find locations where the wants of the greater portion require them, and if any of the present institutions require removal, the value of property in the eastern wards will no doubt increase with the increasing business and population, so as to justify their removal elsewhere. But many of our public institutions are already in the west. Of 67 churches 28 are west of Seventh Street. Some having been driven west by the crowded and noisy state of the city; and others in pursuit of their congregations; and most of these are the largest and most ornamental in the city. Most of the fashionable, as well as best schools, as well private as public, are in the west. The University, Mint, Masonic Hall, Musical Fund Hall, Deaf and Dumb, and Blind Institutions, Pennsylvania Hospital, Almshouse, Preston Retreat, Orphans' and Widows' Asylums, Wills' Hospital, &c. &c. are all in the west; some of them seeking retirement from disturbance by a progressive population, in the country.

That the time for erecting new buildings has arrived, is, I take for granted, admitted by all. Judges, juries, lawyers,—every body seems to say so. Some think it too soon to place them in Penn Square; but we certainly will be thought more wise than our forefathers were, when they planted the present building where it is,—inaccessible probably six months in the year. We are precisely in opposite circumstances from them. Placed at the state-house when first erected, scarcely a house might be seen,—placed now at Penn Square, nothing else can be seen, because of the houses. It is convenient of access, by day or by night; good pavements, lights by night, omnibus or rail-road cars in every direction, to suit those who choose not to walk,—of all which our forefathers knew nothing.

Having now, at much more length than I at first intended, presented my views on the subject, I shall submit it to those whose province it is to decide the question, after hearing the expressed sentiments of their constituents.

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